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THE  
Rabun Industrial School  
AND  
Mountain School Extension Work  
AMONG THE MOUNTAIN WHITES

(BY ONE OF THEM)

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ANDREW J. RITCHIE, A. M.  
Founder and Superintendent

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RABUN GAP, GEORGIA

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## Map of the Mountain Region.



"In all the broad reach of this land of the free there is no field so teeming with the possibilities of a clear-sighted, virile, well-balanced, glorious Americanism as that to be found in the romantic Appalachian country.

"And yet the husbandman of the mind does not bind up his sheaves there, nor the gleaner fill his bosom. Oh, what a harvest to be gathered and ripened."—Judge Emory Speer, on *The Men of the Mountains*;

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LOGAN E. BLECKLEY.  
Georgia's Venerable Ex-Chief Justice and Grand  
Old Man of the Mountains.

TO THE PROSPEROUS AND THE GENEROUS:

Rabun is my native county, and I have kept in touch with its people all my life. I know their needs and their resources. With a few rare exceptions, they are an excellent population—none better anywhere within the range of my acquaintance. But they are poor. There is no school of advanced grade within the limits of the county, and never has been. Children in that region abound; the valleys and hillsides literally swarm with them, and many of them have as bright minds as can be found on earth.

An effort is now being made to construct and maintain a school at which these children, or a due proportion of them, can obtain a practical education. The leader in this good cause is Professor Andrew J. Ritchie, himself a native of the county, and one of the few natives who have managed to acquire a collegiate education. He is devoting his time and energies to this noble work as a labor of love, and without the hope of other reward than the good which others may derive from it in the years to come. I have known him from his childhood, and have known his parents and his grandparents from my own early manhood. I vouch for his fidelity, and pledge myself for the honest application of all funds which may be entrusted to him for the purpose above referred to. Moreover, I appeal to all the able and willing to aid him with such contributions as they can afford.

Very respectfully,

LOGAN E. BLECKLEY.

Atlanta, Ga., January 4, 1901.

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## A PERSONAL WORD CONCERNING THE WORK.

The object of this prospectus is to ask assistance for a work to which the writer has felt himself moved in behalf of a people which he believes are today the most important element in the South or on the American Continent to be reached by education—namely, the isolated and unlettered white people of the Southern Appalachian mountains.

This work is one to which I have been impelled from a sense of patriotic duty and responsibility, and at the sacrifice of personal interests which it has been necessary to make to undertake such a work in this needy field. The county in which the work has been projected is the county in which I was born and reared. These mountain people are my own people. I know their great potential worth, and the privations and destitutions by which they are surrounded. The disadvantages under which they labor are so great that no material improvement of their educational status is possible in this generation unless they shall have assistance from the outside, and unless some one shall undertake to secure this assistance for them by enlisting the interest of the outside world in their condition.



A CABIN ON THE SCHOOL FARM,  
Showing the Industrial School in the Background.





A MOUNTAIN FAMILY.

#### AIM OF THE WORK.

These isolated mountain people are not only lacking in education but are lacking in social and economic efficiency. They are without community spirit and incentive to community action. They have no large social life, and are to a sad degree without wholesome moral and social standards. Their religious life is in a dormant and decadent condition. Their industrial and economic life is notably inefficient and improvident.

They need not only education which will develop their latent intellect and talent, but also education which will develop their industrial and social activities. They need to learn how to live and how to work, not only to own their homes as most of them do, but to make them more comfortable and wholesome, and to cultivate their mountain farms in a scientific and intensive way. They need to learn the value of time, to acquire skill and efficiency, to cultivate thrift and frugality, and to make the most of their resources.

## A WORK OF EDUCATIONAL MISSIONS.

The work is one of educational missions. It seeks to supply educational means and educational endeavor in a vast isolated field in which these are lacking. It is a mission work which undertakes to help people help themselves. The mountain people are to be used as far as possible in working out their welfare. The work has not been thrust upon them, but has been projected as their own. Outside aid is solicited on condition that they do what they can themselves. This they are being brought to do to a remarkable degree.

To secure the largest local co-operation and also to unite all available outside aid in a common cause, the work has been projected upon a non-sectarian basis. It seeks the aid and co-operation of all Christian and philanthropic organizations. It has been brought to its present stage by what the mountain people have been able to do, together with the sacrifices which I in common with them have been willing to make, and with the help of a few outside friends who have come to its aid at needy times. Now that the mountain people have done the most that they are able to do in getting the work started, its further development depends upon the enlargement of help from outside.

## A SOUTHERN WHITE PROBLEM.

The educational problem of the South is a white problem as well as a negro problem. It is the problem of the illiterate whites of the mountains as well as the illiterate negroes of the lowlands. It is a white problem as to what shall be done through the education of the white man for the proper solution of the problem of the negro, as well as to what shall be done through the education of the white man for himself.

The solution of the educational and economic problem of the negro is being found in education which provides industrial training, and much is being done, by both North and South, for the uplift of the negro in this direction. I plead for a like provision for the vast armies of unschooled and un-

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BYRD PRINTING COMPANY, ATLANTA.

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H. V. M. MILLER, M. D., LL.D.

General Andrew Miller was an American officer in the war of 1812, from South Carolina. His wife was a Miss Cheri, of Virginia, of Huguenot descent. The family moved to Georgia and settled in the Little Tennessee Valley, near Rabun Gap. The Miller residence was one of the first frame houses built in this section. It still stands about a mile south of the Industrial School. It was here that Dr. Miller spent his boyhood, among the inspiring scenes of Georgia's grandest mountains. Later the family left this section, and the son became known in Georgia politics as the "Demosthenes of the Mountains," was elected U. S. Senator in the days of Reconstruction, and died dean of the Georgia medical profession. His brilliant career shows the stuff that is in the mountain boy and his attainments when he gets a chance.

trained whites in the isolated mountain districts about whose condition little is known and for whom little provision is being made.

Of the 210 counties in the South in which upwards of 20 per cent of the white voters are unable to read and write, the greater number are found grouped together in the heart of this mountain region in which the population is almost entirely white. In the area centering about the converging corners of the state so of which it forms a part a map of 140 contiguous counties can be traced in which more than 90 per cent of the voters are white, and in which more than 20 per cent of these white voters are unable to read and write.

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#### A PROBLEM OF NATIONAL CONCERN.

The Southern mountain region, lying in the heart of the South and comprising in one body the entire mountainous areas of the South east of the Mississippi, is the home of three and a half millions of white people. In its isolated position it has for a hundred years formed the neglected backyards of the states of which it forms a part. In the meantime it has furnished a sturdy American yeomanry which has rendered conspicuous service throughout our national history. Sam Houston, Andrew Jackson, Andrew Johnson, and Abraham Lincoln are types of the men it has produced.

This great region forms today a middle territory between the two sections recently divided by the Civil War. It likewise forms an intermediate territory of national integration between these two sections. These mountain people are Americans—Americans in descent and sentiment. They have always stood for the integrity of the nation. Their patriotism has always been national rather than sectional. They were foremost among the nation's founders, and have been foremost among its defenders. They form today the largest and most distinct body of original American stock on the Continent. It is from the great reserve of this virile stock which they constitute that the purest American blood is



JOSEPH E. BROWN.

Spending his childhood and boyhood in the mountain section to be benefitted by the proposed industrial school, four times Governor of Georgia, Chief Justice, United States Senator, his career illustrates the possibilities of the mountain boy.

to be transmitted to future generations. Shall it not be likewise that in their inherent patriotism and in their development by education are to be found the best reinforcements for the solution of the problems which concern alike the South and the Nation, and for the preservation of the highest American ideals?



A PATRIARCH AND HIS SECOND FAMILY.

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#### A TYPICAL MOUNTAIN COUNTY.

Rabun County, the county in which this educational work is projected, lies in the heart of this illiterate mountain region. It occupies a strategic position in this great field. It is within striking distance of four states, and in the midst of a section in which the mountain ends of three of these states converge. In the region to which it is fairly central a map of no less than fifty contiguous counties can be traced in which 95 per cent of the voters are white, and in which 25 per cent of the voters are illiterate. Situated in the heart of the Blue Ridge mountains, in the extreme northeastern corner of Georgia, hedged about by mountain barriers on its southern and western borders and on the borders of the

Carolinas, it has been, until the recent advent of a railroad, one of the most isolated and inaccessible counties in all the Southern mountain region. In its isolated position all the conditions have prevailed peculiar to the remote mountain community. It presents the mountain problem in all its phases—educational, social, moral, religious and economic.

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### THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE.

The people found in this mountain county are of the early Anglo-Saxon stock which has been preserved in the isolated mountain districts of the South as the purest and most distinct remnant of original American blood on the Continent. They are the descendants through several generations of early settlers who moved southward and westward into the mountains from Southern Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas. They are principally of English and Scotch-Irish descent, with a sprinkling of Dutch and Huguenot. Among them are the descendants of men who fought at Cowpens and King's Mountain, and at the Horseshoe and New Orleans. They are a people of heroic and unsubdued spirit, prolific, patriotic, and in point of physique and native mentality the equals of any population on the globe.

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### THEIR BACKWARD CONDITION.

The backward conditions prevailing among these people are not to be accounted for by any theory of original inferiority as a race or class, but are conditions which have been produced by the long operation of influences under which it would be more than human for a people not to retrograde or degenerate. Their greatest misfortune has been their long enforced isolation from the outside world. Shut off in the mountains, without railroads and other means of outside communication, they have fallen behind in the march of progress and have been overtaken by evils peculiar to their environment which have intensified their unhappy condition.





NO RACE SUICIDE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

## MOUNTAIN WHISKEY.

One of the greatest of these evils is mountain whiskey. There are few of the mountain people today who do not know that its illicit manufacture is both legally and morally wrong. Its evil effects are patent to every observer of mountain conditions. There is no greater source of moral or social deterioration. Its trail of sloth and shiftlessness can be traced to every mountain cabin where the wolf of hunger howls at the door. Its trail of blood can be traced on every page of mountain criminal history. The resources which it causes to be wasted in idleness, dissipation, and litigation in the courts would build a school and church in every community.

Rabun County has most unhappily suffered from this great evil. Its secluded position and its inaccessibility to outside markets have made it inevitably the home of the "moonshiner" and a banner county for the manufacture of this "moonshine" product. The county is today fairly swamped with whiskey and whiskey sentiment.

## THE MOUNTAIN FEUD.

Another evil peculiar to the mountain environment is the mountain feud and the divisions which exist among the people and prevent their co-operation for their common good. In the midst of the ignorance and prejudice which prevail in the narrow mountain horizons, feuds and divisions arise which last from generation to generation. The feud almost invariably divides the people in politics, and the adherents of the opposing factions are found arrayed against each other in any matter in which there can be a conceivable factional or political advantage. The spirit of division affects the building of schools, churches, public highways and every interest which the people should have in common.

Rabun County has almost from the beginning of its history been the seat of unhappy divisions which have kept it in a weak and disorganized condition. It has become widely known for the number and frequency of its homicides, and for the strife and lawlessness which have existed within its borders.



A "MOONSHINE" STILL.



A CARRIER THAT ENDS IN THE MOUNTAIN KILLING.

## MORAL CONDITIONS.

The moral condition of the mountain people and their attitude toward law and order have been formed largely by their surroundings. It could scarcely be otherwise than that in the midst of their isolation there should be a deterioration of moral standards. It has been impossible to maintain the school and the church in a measure commensurate with intellectual and spiritual demands. The churches which have survived are in a moribund condition. In many places the Gospel is seldom heard. The native preacher is without education, and often without the moral requisites of acceptable leadership. There has been a decline from the standards of citizenship of the first settlers. In many instances the descendants of original leading families have degenerated to the lowest levels. It is impossible in the remote mountain community where these conditions prevail to rehabilitate society with the present adult population. The only hope is to be found in the children. It is with them that the work of regeneration must begin.

## ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

The conditions under which the mountain people have lived have not promoted habits of thrift and industry. They have inherited to a large extent the leisure and makeshifts of the early backwoodsman who found it easy to subsist on the wild game and the corn-patch cultivated by his wife and children, and have been schooled to the poverty and privations of this manner of living. As a result they are not fore-handed. Many of them live from hand to mouth. Their most abundant commodity is their unused and unvalued time. They are rich because they are poor. They are independent because their wants are few and simple.

Though rich in undeveloped resources, Rabun is one of the poorest counties in all the mountain region. The people are uniformly of small means. There is no wealthy family or individual among them. They have no money crop, and handle little money from year to year. Their possessions

are limited to their small boundaries of mountain and valley land and the few head of live-stock which they raise on their mountain pastures.

While a portion of the more well-to-do have fairly comfortable houses, the great majority live in small cabins of one or two rooms, with scant furniture, without comforts and conveniences, and without many of the common articles of civilized life. Large families are the rule, and it is quite as common as otherwise to find a family of six to ten persons living in a cabin of one room, and often under conditions that are primitive to the last degree.



TENDING THE CORN-PATCH.

(Not an uncommon scene in the mountains.)

### WEAKNESS OF THE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY IN COMMUNITY ACTION.

Not only are the people poor and thinly settled, but their weakness in community action is out of proportion to their poverty and fewness in numbers. There are almost insuperable obstacles to be overcome in organizing them in any movement requiring concerted action. They form a society in which they live as separate units. Their environment tends toward extreme independence and individuality. They are not given to the impulse and enthusiasm of co-operation. Their attitude toward their public interests is one of aloof-

ness and indifference. They have not learned the lesson of the bundle of sticks—that in union there is strength. The greatest obstacles of all are the feuds and schisms which deprive any concerted movement of the solidarity of its full strength. For these reasons outside aid in educational and religious work is quite as necessary to get the people to do what they can themselves as for the good it will do of itself.

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#### PRESENT EDUCATIONAL STATUS.

Rabun is one of the most illiterate counties in all the mountain region. According to the census of 1900, upwards of 20 per cent of the white voters were unable to read and write, and more than 98 per cent of the voters were white.

Until the opening of the Industrial School in 1905 there was no school of advanced grade in the county. The only schools have been the little public schools which run from 60 to 90 days in the year, and these have made little intelligent headway. They are taught in most wretched houses and by teachers with little more training than these schools afford. The average child attends school about 40 days in the year, and the schooling which he gets is of the poorest and most rudimentary sort.

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#### A NEW EDUCATION NEEDED.

The old education fails to reach the mountain problem because it is not adapted to mountain conditions. The goal which it sets before the mountain boy or girl is too often an escape from the work and environment of the mountain community and a change to the life of the town or city. Its practical operation is to educate the brightest material out of the community and to leave its social and economic life weakened and impoverished. The kind of education needed is education which shall have a larger bearing upon the life which the people are to lead. The school through which this education is to be provided must establish a practical connection between education and work. Its course of study must have to do with the industries of the environment. The mountain boy needs to be trained in agriculture, forestry,



A TYPICAL MOUNTAIN SCHOOL.



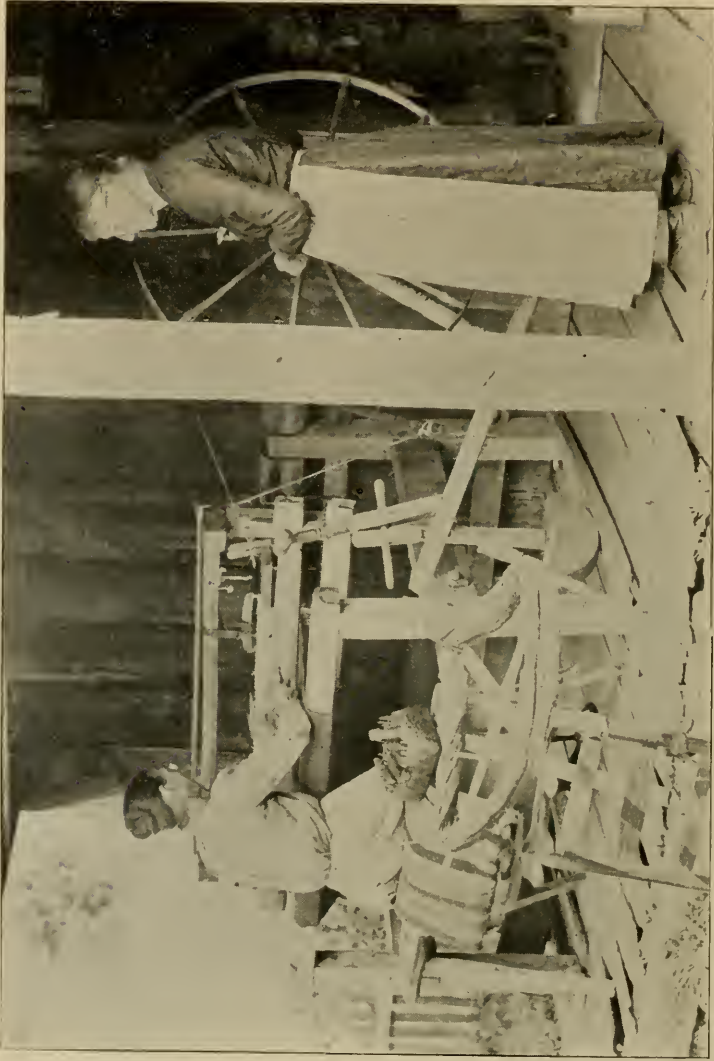
dairying and animal husbandry, and in handicrafts in wood-work and other industries for which the materials lie at hand unused. The mountain girl needs to be trained in the arts of orderly housekeeping and successful home-making which shall combine with the pure mountain air and water to give these people the physical health which is their birthright.

The mountain school must also be an evangelizing spiritual and moral force. It must do the work which is not being done in the remote mountain district by the church and the evangelistic preacher. It must set in motion influences which will soften the mountain temper and displace the spirit of feud. It must banish the evil of whiskey and its attendant evils of moral and social degradation. It must impart such a breadth and richness of social life as shall make the mountain community an attractive place in which to live.

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#### NATURAL BASIS FOR INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION.

The natural basis for this kind of education is found in the economic condition of the people and in the industries which they must pursue. They must earn their living with the labor of their own hands. Their wealth must come from the soil and the products of their handicrafts. They are their own carpenters, their own blacksmiths, and to a large extent their own weavers. Their household furniture, farming implements, and wearing apparel are largely home-made. Their resources and industrial environment constitute a basis of wealth which if developed by industrial education will make them less dependent than any other people upon the outside world, for their living.



MAKING HOME-MADE JEANS.

## PART II.

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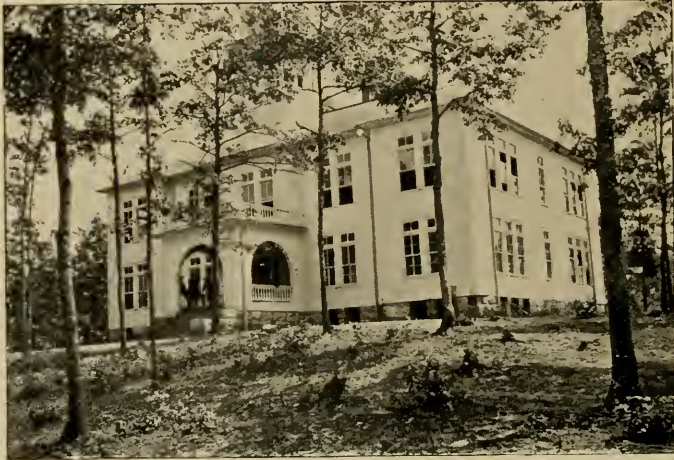
### STORY OF THE EFFORT TO ESTABLISH THE PROJECTED INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

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In August, 1902, while on a visit to the county during my vacation as a teacher at Baylor University, Texas, I saw the great need of not only a strong school in the county, but of a school that would provide something more than the old education of the text-books. I noticed that the brightest boys were leaving the county, and that the girls, as a rule, were being left without education and in the midst of surroundings in which their social condition was helpless and hopeless. I thought how much it would mean if there could be a school in which these boys and girls could be educated at home and trained in profitable occupations so that they would remain in the county and marry and make homes and elevate the standards of life and society in their communities.

With this thought in mind, I urged the building of such a school and agreed to undertake to secure outside aid for it if the people would take up the movement and carry it forward among themselves. This effort failed, however, on account of the divisions among the people and the lack of leadership.

In June, 1903, my health at the same time requiring a change of work and climate, I resigned my position at Baylor University and returned to the county with the purpose of giving my personal attention to the work until a school should be established.



THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDING.

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### CANVASS FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

I had saved a few hundred dollars out of my three years' teaching, and with a part of this I purchased a pony and a typewriter, and with the assistance of my wife as my secretary I began a canvass for subscriptions among the mountain farmers and a correspondence with people outside the county whom I thought I might interest in the undertaking.

It was decided to locate the school in my home community, which was the strongest in resources and population in the county and which offered a large tract of land and liberal subscriptions toward the construction. In the course of the summer and fall I found about 25 men in this community who would give \$100 each to have the school built in their midst.

I then entered upon a canvass of the county to find how many citizens would give \$100 to have the school built in the county. A few were found outside of the local community who would give this amount. I then sought for men in the local community and elsewhere who would give \$50, then for

those who would give \$25, and on down to a dollar. I was anxious to get every grown person in the community to give something, and to get every voter in the county to contribute if possible.

The subscriptions were taken on a two years plan to give the people time to meet the payments, and to develop the plans of the work and construct a suitable building.

It was no slight task to make this thorough canvass of a county which is forty miles from corner to corner and in which the best mode of travel is on horseback. The work of securing and collecting the subscriptions has been so great that I have been able to carry it forward only from month to month as I found time from the attention required to the construction of the building and the correspondence and travel in the interest of the undertaking outside of the county.

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### CONSTRUCTION OF THE BUILDING.

As soon as enough subscriptions were secured to warrant the undertaking of the building, I organized a Board of Trustees of the best citizens of the county to hold the title to the property, and then organized a Building and Finance Committee of the best men in the local community. The men composing these two bodies, numbering about 20 active workers in all, have shown the stuff they are made of in the struggles through which the undertaking has passed.

The building, a modern structure especially designed for an industrial school, was begun with very little money in hand. It was not the simple matter of making an appropriation and coming within its limits, but of projecting the undertaking within its reasonable proportions and getting the people to pay in their money as they could, and when they had no money to give their labor and such building material as could be used.

Some of them brought their teams and made the excavations for the basement story, others quarried and hauled the stone, still others cut and hauled the logs to the saw mill for the framing, and almost the entire community shared in hauling the rest of the material over the mountains from the rail-



The New School.

road, a distance of 15 or 20 miles for the round trip, and in this way saved a great deal of money which they were unable to give. Thus the building was constructed as the money and material came in, and with the great gain that as it grew the people felt that it was their own, and that as friendly gifts came from the outside they realized they were doing what they could to help themselves.

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### THE PART OF THE MOUNTAIN PEOPLE IN THE WORK.

About \$5,000 has been raised in the county. Of this the local community has given about \$4,000, and the rest of the county about \$1,000. The subscriptions have ranged from \$125 to 25 cents. Nearly every grown person in the community has given something, and more than a third of the voters of the county have contributed.

The Rabun Gap School Improvement Club, an organization among the women and girls, has proved a most valuable auxiliary to the work of the men. Its work of beautifying the school grounds won for it, for amount of work done, first mention in a contest among the school improvement clubs of the State.

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### A WORK OF FAITH.

The work of constructing the building and operating the school for its first term has now, (May 1906), occupied almost three years. During this long period I have gone into every part of the county and have talked to almost every voter, either publicly or privately, on the subject of education. Most of the time I have gone on horseback, sometimes in a buggy, and often on foot. I have put my hands to every part of the work, from hauling the stone from the quarry and the logs to the saw mill.

I have gone by faith and not by sight. There have been many hours of discouragement and deep anguish of soul, but despair has never been quite despair. I have been

guided at all times by an abiding faith and hope, and a consciousness of the great interests of the mountain people involved in the success or failure of the undertaking.

Throughout the work I have had the assistance of my wife, herself a native of the mountains, who has been my secretary, has assisted in the work among the women and girls, and has taught the classes in sewing and needle work. I have also been constantly assisted by Mr. David Rickman, one of the mountain men, who has been my local manager, has been faithful in all things, and has given freely of his means and practically a year of his time and labor. The undertaking would have been impossible, however, but for the great help of my aged father and mother who have divided their living with the school and have so kindly taken care of our little family while we have given ourselves and our all to the work.

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### PART III.

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#### SKETCH OF THE INDUSTRIAL SCHOOL.

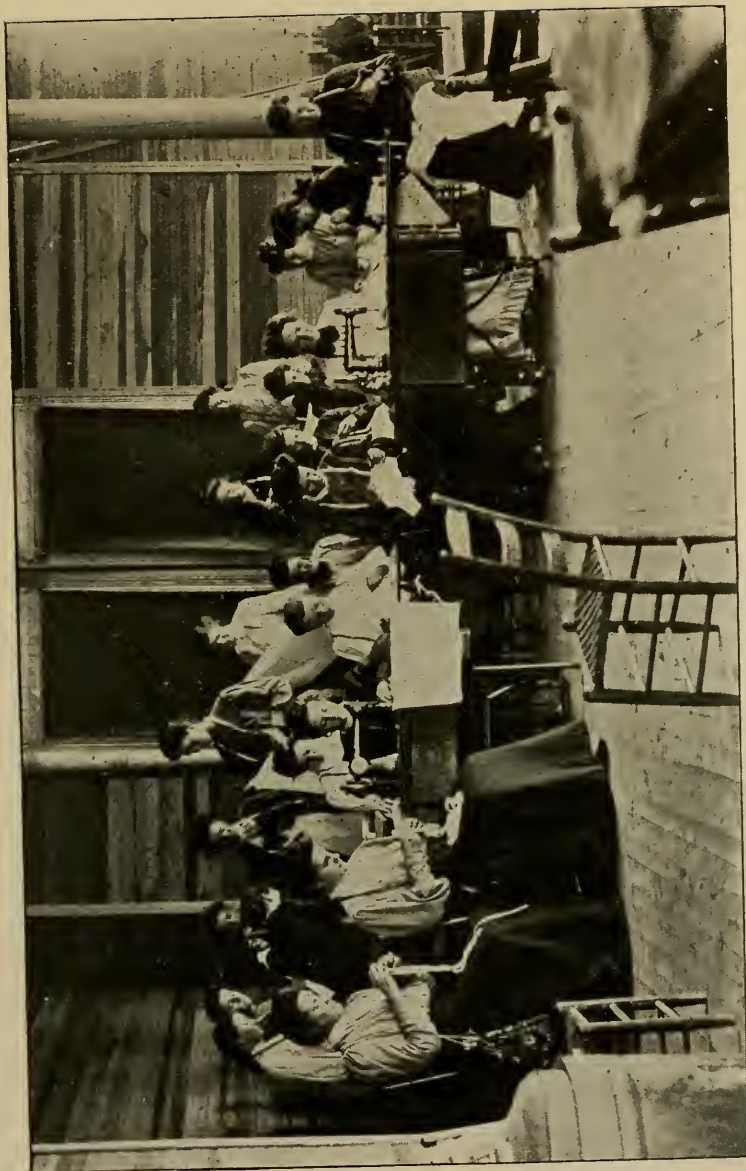
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##### LOCATION.

The school is located in the large and beautiful valley at the source of the waters forming the Little Tennessee River, near the Rabun Gap, and near the watershed of the Blue Ridge between the Gulf and the Atlantic. It is on the line of the Tallulah Falls Railway, now being extended into the heart of this mountain region.

The valley is about twenty-five miles around the rim, and is regarded as the most beautiful in this part of the Appalachians. It contains about 400 school children attending the new school and neighboring public schools. The school is so centrally located that the two largest public schools have been consolidated in the new building, and all of the 400 children live within four miles of its site. It is hoped that with the aid of funds to provide school transportation all of these 400 children can be brought to





MRS. RITCHIE AND A CLASS IN SEWING.

this central school. There is no school of advanced grade in all the surrounding country within a radius of 30 to 40 miles.

#### GENERAL PLAN AND SCOPE.

The school is planned as an industrial and high school for the surrounding mountain country in which poor boys and girls can support themselves in part by their work, and as a model school for the local community. It is being operated in connection with the public school system and will be incorporated under the laws of Georgia with a board of directors of leading men and women in business and educational circles.

#### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

The property at present consists of a main building erected at a cost of about \$7,500, and ten acres of land in



MR. ARRENDALE AND THE FIRST GRADE AT THE  
SCHOOL GARDEN.

the campus. The value of the entire equipment is now about \$10,000. The building contains a complete basement

story for the departments of manual and domestic training, and two upper stories in which are six recitation rooms, the assembly room, and library.

A contract has been closed on an adjacent tract of land of 30 acres for a school farm and school gardens. The building is seated on the crest of a beautiful knoll rising above the valley at its center, and this tract of 30 acres forms a plateau at the base of this elevation which affords an ideal seat for the dormitories, cottages and gardens of the school settlement.

Funds are being gathered by the Daughters of the Confederacy of Georgia to build a large dormitory as a home for mountain girls who will do their own housekeeping and receive practical training in domestic science under the supervision of the teachers in charge.

A dormitory of a similar kind is being planned for boys who will earn a part of their expenses by their work and also do their own housekeeping.

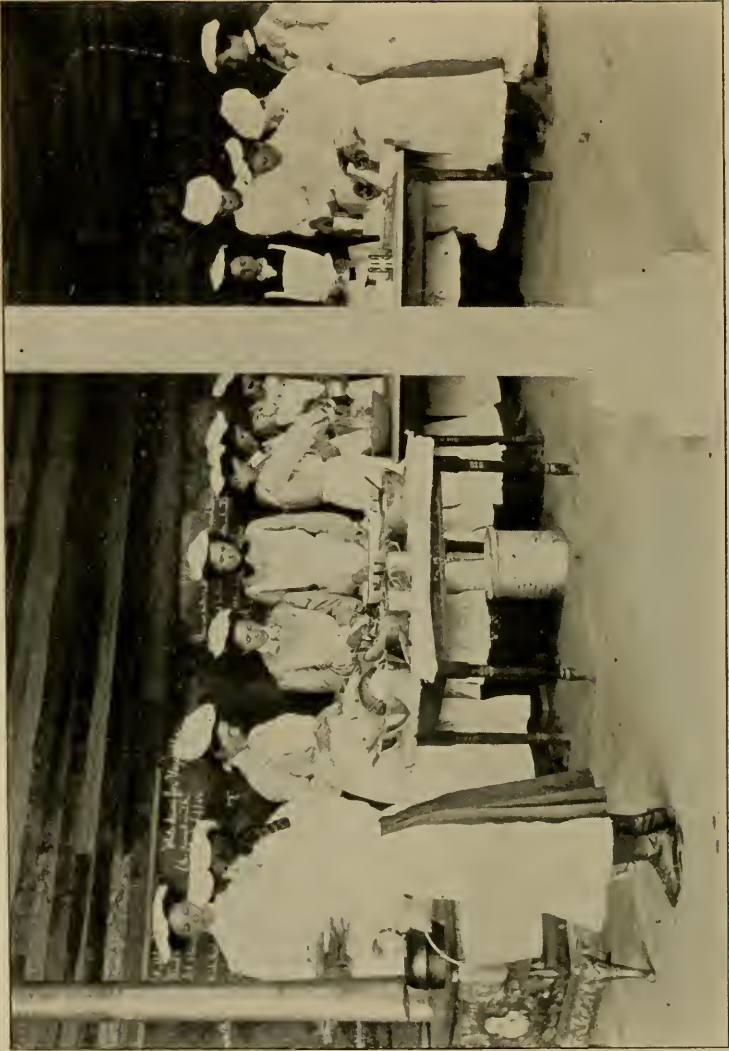
Many pupils, both boys and girls, have been turned away from the school this year on account of the lack of room.

#### PRESENT STATUS.

Only a beginning has been made toward the kind of school which has been planned. A group of six teachers have been found who possess the training and consecration required, and a day school was opened last October on an industrial basis. About 240 pupils have been enrolled. These include seven grades of children and an additional grade of older students, a number of whom are preparing themselves to teach in the public schools of the county.

The usual common school and high school studies are taught in connection with training in manual, domestic and agricultural industries. Each pupil works an hour and a half each day.

Thus far departments have been organized in Agriculture and School Gardening; Carpentry and Blacksmithing; Domestic Science and Home Administration; Sewing, Needlework, and Basketry; Mountain Settlement and Mission Work; and School Music.



MISS EDWARDS AND A CLASS IN COOKING.

There is also a Library and Literary Circle, a Students' Prayer Meeting, a Temperance Union, and a Woman's Club which meet at the school.

#### EXPENSES.

The expenses are defrayed in small part by the public school fund apportioned to the community and such tuition fees and other contributions as the people are able to pay. These funds, however, are so inadequate that the greater part of the funds required are raised by solicitation of individual contributions.

#### IMMEDIATE NEEDS.

1.	To finish paying for school farm-----	\$ 800
2.	To complete amount needed for girls' dormitory--	1,200
3.	To cover difference between local funds and operating expenses for the coming year-----	2,000
4.	To provide industrial equipment-----	1,000
5.	To build a boys' dormitory-----	2,500
6.	To build a teachers' home-----	2,000
7.	To purchase a school piano-----	300
8.	To provide a horse and buggy for settlement and mission work -----	200

#### 9 SCHOLARSHIPS.

a. \$16 will pay for tuition for the poorest child in the community for a session of eight (8) months, at \$2 per month.

b. \$50 will cover board and tuition and enable a mountain boy or girl to live at the school eight (8) months, with what they can earn by their work.



BOYS AT WORK IN THE SHOP.

## PART IV.

### SCHOOL EXTENSION WORK.

In January, 1905, I became County Superintendent of Schools. I found that there were in the county about 2,000 school children and about 35 public schools. Less than three-fourths of the children were being enrolled in the schools, and less than half were in regular attendance. The school term was only 90 days in the year, and several schools were in operation only 60 or 70 days on account of the uncomfortable condition of the houses during cold weather.

#### SCHOOL HOUSES.

The average school house is a log cabin or weather-boarded shanty without ceiling, comfortable heating, seating, or other modern equipment. Until the opening of the Industrial School, 1905, there was not a modern school desk in the county. Schools are taught in a number of houses which are not worth \$20. The entire school equipment in 1903 was officially reported at \$4,000, or about \$2 worth of school property for each pupil, which was a high valuation..

#### SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION.

The county is made up of several small communities in which only one school is possible and of other larger ones in which the number of schools has been multiplied beyond the number needed.

These larger communities are the large valleys and places where several valleys come together and form a natural school center accessible to a large population. The roads come down the creeks to their junction with the larger creek or river, and at the junction of the roads is the country store, the postoffice, the "law ground," and the church, but, curiously enough, not always the school.

The reason is that the mountaineer wants the school as near as possible to his door and on his side of the creek. It



A School of the Creeks and Coves, Showing the Needs of School Extension Work.



matters not whether there are enough pupils to make a school which will pay a teacher or whether the teacher is competent to teach. There has been consolidation and centralization in everything else, but the community of interests in the school have been parceled out among the creeks, with the result of the log schoolhouse, the indifferent teacher, and the poorly attended school.

The importance of school consolidation in the little mountain community in which it takes all the people to build a good schoolhouse and all the children to make a good school, and in which the people need to be brought together in harmonious community action, can readily be seen. The following are a few instances in which consolidation has been accomplished.

#### CONSOLIDATION AT RABUN GAP.

At the beginning of the work to establish the Industrial School at Rabun Gap there were in the community six public schools attended by about 400 children. The two largest of these schools have been consolidated in the new school. The larger of the old buildings will be used temporarily as a dormitory for boys. This consolidation was made possible through the outside aid secured in building this large school. secured in building this large school.

#### THE OLD AND NEW AT WOLF FORK.

The Wolf Fork community lies at the junction of several creeks which come together from opposite directions. Here two schools have been brought together in a new school which will have about 80 pupils and two teachers, making possible a graded school. One of the old buildings and the new one appear in the cuts, showing the contrast. One of the old houses has been sold for \$17, and will be removed and made into a barn. The new building cost \$500. Another \$100 has been added to purchase modern desks, and still another \$100 to extend the public school term. A few years ago this community was a famous whiskey center. The consummation here presented has been brought about by a little outside aid and initiative, and the example of the people at Rabun Gap.



The Old at Wolf Fork—Sold for \$17.



The New at Wolf Fork. Value of Building and Equipments, \$600.

#### THE SITUATION AT TIGER.

At Tiger, in the southern part of the county, the situation was, until the beginning of this work, in a state of chaos. There were two little schools, almost in sight of each other, being taught in wretched houses; the two school constituencies were jealous of each other, and one of them was

hopelessly divided within itself. After a series of school meetings and conferences, and with the offer of a little aid out of a building fund which I have managed to get together, the two parts of the community have come together and adopted a location for a consolidated school, have let the contract for the building, and have raised a subscription of \$600 among themselves. The new school will bring together about 140 pupils and will require three teachers.

#### THE REST OF THE COUNTY.

The work thus begun shows the way in which the public school system of the county is to be reconstructed and in which these struggling little schools are to be built up. There are about twenty other places in the county in which new schoolhouses are badly needed and at perhaps half of these two schools should be consolidated in one. In most of the cases, however, the people are too poor to do as much as at the stronger places where the work has been started. In several places they are unable to contribute any money at all. They have, however, plenty of timber for building, and are willing to give this and cut it and haul it to the saw mill and help construct the house, if enough money can be secured to get such material as can be paid for only in cash.



A Typical Log Structure at Bridge Creek—Value about \$20.

## NEEDS.

The needs of the school extension work are, first, a fund from outside sources to be used in consolidating schools and building new houses, to be given on condition that the people do what they can. From \$300 to \$750 will build a school house that will last for a generation. With the start that has been made, if I could have at my disposal as County Superintendent \$1,000 a year for three years, I could in that time secure the building of a new set of school houses throughout the county.

Second, a similar fund to be used in supplementing the local funds to extend the public school term. An outside fund of \$1,000 a year for three years would secure the extension of the school term to six months.



Good Honest Mountain Folk of the Isolated Settlement.

## ENDORSEMENTS OF THE WORK.

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**J. M. TERRELL**, Governor of Georgia.

“I have had occasion to visit the Rabun Industrial School, at Rabun Gap, Ga., and I take pleasure in unreservedly commending that school and its founder, Prof. A. J. Ritchie, to all good people interested in educational matters. This school reaches the mountain boys and girls of Northeast Georgia and Western North Carolina and affords them an opportunity to secure an education and special training along those lines most needed by them.”

**W. B. MERRITT**, State School Commissioner.

“Prof. Ritchie has undertaken to establish an industrial school for the boys and girls of the Blue Ridge mountains, which is the most illiterate section of our State. Such a school is greatly needed, and Mr. Ritchie's plans are approved by our educators, and by thoughtful men all over the State. Since undertaking this work Mr. Ritchie has become Superintendent of Schools in the county in which the work is located, and he and his wife are living on the meagre salary which this position affords and devoting themselves to this noble work. Any aid that may be given him in this important and difficult work will be worthily bestowed.”

The late Chancellor **W. B. HILL**, of the University of Georgia.

“Prof. Ritchie is a native of Rabun County who obtained a college education in Georgia and took a course at Harvard and had a position as teacher in Baylor University. He gave up this position and prospect of advancement to return and help the people of his native county. I do not know of any instance of sacrifice and service equal to that Mr. Ritchie is rendering to his people, and I do not believe there can be found anywhere in the United States a local effort under hard and unpromising conditions which would surpass what the rural mountain people of Rabun County have done for this school.”

**E. C. BRANSON**, President State Normal School.

“I know the county, the community, and the conditions concerned in the enterprise which Mr. Ritchie represents. The kind of school proposed for the people of this remote mountain region would thoroughly illustrate the value of a rural industrial school of advanced grade. It is a unique situation and offers a unique opportunity for the benevolence of the generous and the well-to-do. I heartily commend the enterprise.”

**HOKE SMITH**, Ex-Secretary of the Interior.

“Prof. Ritchie, realizing the needs of improved methods and advancement in the schools for white boys and girls among the mountain districts of North Georgia, abandoned college teaching and has established an industrial school in Rabun County to meet the needs of these people, and is now endeavoring to maintain this institution by raising funds by private subscriptions. I know Mr. Ritchie person-



ally, am familiar with his plans, have visited the school in the course of its construction, and am glad to give him and his undertaking my cordial endorsement and personal assistance."

**REV. S. Y. JAMESON, D. D.**, Secretary of the Baptist Mission Board of Georgia.

"Having been acquainted with Rabun County and contiguous territory for a number of years, I do not hesitate to endorse the movement to establish an industrial and literary school in that section in which such a school is so greatly needed. The demand of the school is imperative, and money expended in its support will yield a large dividend in the upbuilding of the race. Prof. Ritchie's self-sacrificing labor in behalf of the people of his native county is another evidence that the age of genuine heroism has not entirely given place to the reign of materialism and selfishness."

**EMORY SPEER**, United States Judge.

"It would be difficult to find a section of the country where the kind of school proposed would accomplish greater good to a greater number. The writer is well acquainted with the character of the people of Rabun County. No section of the United States produces people of more robust native intellectuality, and all that is needed is to afford these strong and vigorous minds the education and training which such a school will give them."

**JOHN J. KIMSEY**, Judge of the Superior Court, Northeastern Circuit of Georgia.

"I heartily endorse what is said of Mr. Ritchie and believe that the undertaking which he has in hand will lay the foundation for a great work of education in that section, where it will do great good."

**W. J. NORTHERN**, Ex-Governor of Georgia.

"The work undertaken by Prof. Ritchie is in my judgment, one of the greatest educational needs of the State."



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